

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE**  
**Department of Recreation and Parks**

March, 2008

Dear Parents,

A child in your family has expressed an interest in participating in the City of Rockville Recreation and Parks Department T-Ball League. The staff welcomes you and your family to the program.

**I. Purpose**

The purpose of the T-ball program is to provide an opportunity for Rockville youth to learn basic elementary skills of baseball and sportsmanship through participation. It should be an experience for each child to make friends, become physically fit, develop self-confidence, and acquire introductory knowledge of the game.

Emphasis is on fun, skill development, and sportsman-like conduct at all times.

**II. General League Organization**

All teams in the league are coached by volunteer parents, brothers, sisters, neighbors, or just interested individuals. Coaches assume a great responsibility and need your honest support and understanding.

Teams are organized by neighborhood/school districts and ages. This year, the T-ball Majors is open to boys and girls, born 9/1/99-8/31/01- and/or in 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; T-Ball Minors is open to boys and girls born 9/1/01-8/31/02 and/or in Kindergarten.

Practice time is allocated by the Recreation and Parks Department with the goal of providing each team one practice per week. All practices are scheduled at Rockville parks and schools. Generally, there is no practice when the schools are closed for holidays.

Coaches are provided with basic team equipment; however, players must provide their own gloves. Teams will be provided with league T-shirts. Some teams may have sponsors who provide additional monies for hats and other accessories.

**III. Schedule of Play**

All teams will play games on Saturdays at Welsh Park, beginning April 12, 2008. The season will last approximately six weeks, ending around the time schools close for summer. There will be no tournaments at the end of league play. Please check your child's schedule. These dates should serve as a general guide to you and your child's program commitment. (Inclement weather may alter these dates).

**IV. Umpires**

All games are umpired by local youths. They are by no means professionals with years of experience, nor do they have an expert's knowledge of the rules. They are young people, some of whom have played in the City's baseball/softball programs, and are trying to call fair games. The umpires make under \$10 per game. Games may last 60 minutes; therefore, the umpires are not being paid a great deal of money per hour.

Players, coaches, friends, and spectators are expected to treat the umpires with respect and patience. Without the young umpires, the cost of the program would be much higher.

It is important that coaches and spectators set a good example for the players, specifically when the umpire makes a call that does not seem right. Umpires can make mistakes; however, players make many more mistakes during a game than the umpires.

## **V. Playing Rules**

The T-ball program has special playing rules governing player participation. The league also has developed special playing rules to help nurture and develop the young athletes in acquiring the basic elementary skills of the game. Your child's coach has been furnished these rules and will be happy to furnish them or to share them with you.

Equal play is promoted in all boys and girls league play. All team players present at games are entered in the score book and should participate equally in every game unless the child has a health-related circumstance or does not attend practices or games.

## **VI. Parent Responsibilities**

The Recreation and Parks Department, coaches, umpires, and especially the players, need your support and understanding during games. Fans and spectators can be the greatest asset or the greatest detriment to a program.

Many parents enjoy watching their children compete in sports. Sometimes this involvement produces intense and anxious moments and the parents' behavior becomes embarrassing to other parents, officials, and more importantly, to their own children. Parents are encouraged to watch their children participate, and we expect parent behavior to meet acceptable standards such as the following:

- A. Parents should stand or remain seated in their teams' spectator area during the contest.
- B. Parents should not shout instructions or criticisms to the children.
- C. Parents should not make derogatory comments to players, coaches, or other parents about the opposing team or officials.
- D. Parents must not interfere with their child's coach. They must be willing to relinquish responsibility for their child to the coach for period of contest.

**Responsibility of the Coach:** To control his own behavior and that of his assistant(s) and spectators. No coach or spectator may enter the field without recognition and permission from the umpire.

***Parents will be required to read and sign a "Parent's Code of Ethics" which has been developed by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association. These signed pledges should be returned to your child's coach.***

The guiding principle for parents is that nothing in their behavior should detract from any child's enjoyment of the sport. Remember, as parents, you have a good opportunity to teach sportsmanship. Kids will imitate not only what you say, but what you do!

While parents must not interfere with their child's coach during the course of the games and practices, parents continue to have primary responsibility for their child. ***You are expected to transport your child to each practice and game on time, and to pick up your child promptly after each session.*** Please do not allow your children to be transported in an open pick-up truck for safety reasons. Parents are strongly encouraged to stay and observe their child and to assist the coach, if asked.

All coaches this year have participated in a coaches' training program. National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA), a Coaches Certification program, gives instruction on the psychology of coaching youth sports, how to improve performance through proper conditioning, first aid, and a variety of techniques for organizing practices. We and NYSCA have established a code of ethics for coaches which requires coaches to act in a sportsmanlike and fair manner. Coaches are evaluated regarding conformance to the code of ethics.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Each child is important! Through programs such as Rockville T-Ball, youth have the opportunity to experience teamwork, participate in a sport, and come to know their teammates and opponents as people.

We hope that you, as parents, will accentuate the positive. Research has shown that children who have positive reinforcement have higher self-esteem at the end of the season, and tend to remember the program as one filled with fun and enjoyment.

Sincerely,

Lou Clark,  
Sports Specialist

***Please complete the agreement to participate form and return it to your child's coach. Don't forget to read, sign, and return the "Parent's Code of Ethics" to your child's coach!!!***